

# INSIDE OUT FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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## WAGE REDUCTIONS

**L**ike in the community, offenders who work within Missouri's prisons are paid wages according to the skill of the job they perform. As in any company, each institution has a budget they use to pay these wages. Unfortunately, due to budgetary shortfalls for fiscal year 2010, the department finds it necessary to restrict spending and to ensure each institution stays within their allotment of wage and discharge funds.

The offender base pay per month is \$7.50 for those offenders who do not have a verified high school diploma or GED and \$8.50 per month for those offenders who do. In addition to base pay, some offenders are paid premium pay for jobs requiring additional skills. However, due to the current state budget situation, it has become necessary for the department to decrease, and in some cases, eliminate premium pay. The department will continue to closely monitor the state budget situation and will make adjustments in premium pay if it improves.

It is realized this action may create challenges for those offenders who are affected, however, it is essential that each institution stay within their budgeted allotment for offender pay. Offenders with questions regarding this matter are encouraged to contact their assigned caseworker. •

## HOT OFF THE PRESS! FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS



Every few years the Department of Corrections updates the "For Family and Friends" handbook, and the latest edition has just been updated and printed! This guide is an excellent source of information for offender family members and friends and provides information about all aspects of incarceration. In addition, Probation and Parole has also prepared a booklet entitled "A Guide to Understanding Probation and Parole for Family and Friends." If you would like to view either booklet online, you may go to the department's website at [www.doc.mo.gov](http://www.doc.mo.gov) and click on the "3" Family and Friends link. Once there just click on either link. If you would like to receive a paper copy of either booklet, you may contact the Constituent Services Office online at [www.constituentservices@doc.mo.gov](mailto:www.constituentservices@doc.mo.gov) or write to us at Missouri Department of Corrections, Constituent Services Office, P.O. Box 236, Jefferson City, MO 65102. Be sure to provide us with your return address. •

## DOC WEBSITE UPGRADES

Have you ever visited the Missouri Department of Corrections website? If not, it's time you did! The website, [www.doc.mo.gov](http://www.doc.mo.gov), has recently been upgraded and now provides more information to the general public and to you.



As example, by clicking on the "2" Offender Web Search link, you can obtain specific information about an offender including personal identifying information, a photo, a sentence summary and current location. This may help you if you need an address or want to keep track of a loved one or a friend during incarceration. There are also many other features of the website that will answer many of your questions. So next time you have a few moments, check it out! •

## Three Ways to Receive: INSIDE OUT

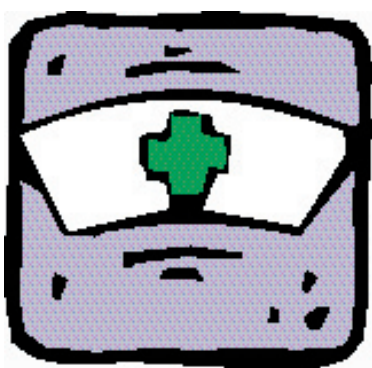
- View a copy of the e-Inside Out on the department's website: [www.doc.mo.gov](http://www.doc.mo.gov) •
- Ask to be placed on the electronic mailing list by emailing [constituentservices@doc.mo.gov](mailto:constituentservices@doc.mo.gov) with "NEWSLETTER" in the subject line •
- Call the Constituent Services Office at (573) 526-2695 or write to Missouri Department of Corrections Constituent Services Office, P.O. Box 236, Jefferson City, MO 65102 to be placed on the e-mailing list •

## MEDICAL CARE IN THE DOC ... DID YOU KNOW?

- Missouri is required by the 8th Amendment to the United States Constitution and by Missouri Statute 217.230 to provide medical services to incarcerated offenders;
- Approximately 33 percent of Missouri's incarcerated offender population has been diagnosed with chronic medical conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, seizure disorders, etc. These offenders are enrolled in one or more chronic care clinics where they are regularly monitored, assessed and treated for those conditions;
- Many of the medical problems currently encountered by offenders are contributed to a history of substance abuse, infectious diseases, injuries due to violence or risky behaviors, lack of previous preventive and routine care, tobacco use and poor dietary habits;
- The leading cause of offender death in the Missouri Department of Corrections is cancer, followed by heart and liver disease. Heart disease and cancer are the most frequent causes of death for all Missourians;
- The death rate for incarcerated offenders in the Missouri Department of Corrections (excluding execution) is approximately 2.6 per 1000 offenders. The death rate for non-incarcerated Missourians is 10.1 per 1000;
- 20 of Missouri's correctional centers are fully accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care. The Missouri Department of Corrections ranks 2nd in the nation in terms of the total number of accredited state correctional centers;
- Correctional Medical Services contracts with 25 Missouri hospitals and over 300 local specialists, clinics and medical supply firms within the community to provide specialized health care for offenders;
- Medical units operate on a 24-hour, 7 day per week basis in 20 of the correctional centers;
- Fifteen institutional medical units operate 24-hour infirmaries for seriously ill or debilitated offenders or those recuperating from illness or surgery; and
- Several infirmaries have negative air pressure rooms for precautionary isolation of possible Tuberculosis cases or other potentially infectious disease. •



## TELE-MEDICINE TESTED IN DOC



Have you heard of one of the latest technologies in medical care called telemedicine? Telemedicine is fairly new technology that is being piloted by the department's medical contractor, Correctional Medical Services, at both Jefferson City Correctional Center and Crossroads Correctional Center.

Telemedicine works through the use of specially designed medical video carts that have been installed in the medical unit. The video system allows an offender to receive diagnoses and treatment by an outside specialist without ever leaving the prison. St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, was the first provider on board with the program, offering specialists in both wound care and pulmonology.

Since then a general surgeon and infectious disease expert have also been made available to see patients through telemedicine. Here's how it works.

For example, a diabetic offender with a wound that won't heal obtains an appointment at the institution's medical unit. The outside specialist is then connected, via a transmitter screen, with the patient and the institutional physician or nurse. The specialist can ask specific questions of the patient and the patient can explain the situation further, face to face, via the transmitter. The specialist can visually see the wound, enlarge the image to assess the area and prescribe advanced treatment, as necessary. The system also allows the outside physician to obtain the offender's vital signs, hear lungs and heart sounds.

As you can see, the system offers great potential not only to reduce costs and promote safety in the community, but to ensure offender patients receive advanced care from outside medical professionals within the community. Because of the success of the program to date, there are plans to expand the use of telemedicine to a total of 15 correctional institutions statewide and expand providers and specialties (cardiac, orthopedics, cancer, etc.) in the near future. •

## PUPPIES FOR PAROLE

Did you know the Department of Corrections is now offering puppies for parole?

Women at the Women’s Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center have been training service dogs for many years, and the program was later expanded to include rescue dogs. Now the program is being expanded further to include men’s facilities, starting at Jefferson City Correctional Center, South Central Correctional Center, Missouri Eastern Correctional Center, and Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center.

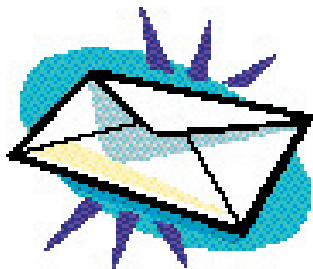
Last year more than 46,000 homeless canines were euthanized in Missouri because they were not adopted from the shelters. The Puppies for Parole program hopes to reduce that number significantly by producing loving, obedient and adoptable dogs. The dogs are assigned to offender “trainers” who have displayed good conduct and who have received training instructions. Each trainer is responsible for his or her dog, 24 hours a day. They provide the dog with daily training and exercise, and are responsible for the dog’s overall care. Once the dogs are trained, they are returned to the shelter for placement in a good home. Several dogs have already been adopted by prison staff. No general revenue funds are used for the program and it operates solely on private donations and donations from offender organizations.

Department of Corrections Director George Lombardi noted, “The dogs have a remarkable impact on the offenders, improving offender behavior and giving offenders incentive to maintain excellent conduct records. Offenders not directly involved in the program are showing responsibility and selflessness by donating to support our efforts. Staff morale is also enhanced by the presence of the dogs.”

Recently somebody tossed ten newborn puppies into a box and dumped them in a Jefferson City park during the extremely cold weather. The puppies were not in good shape when they were found, and the local shelter could not accept them because of the round-the-clock care they needed. So, the puppies were sent to prison. The offenders there welcomed the pups with open arms, staying up round-the-clock to bottle feed them and provide them with the warmth they needed.

A corrections officer who has witnessed the program stated “You can’t normally show affection in here. You don’t give any. You don’t get any.” He then continued “It will be interesting to see what the dogs teach us.” •

## OFFENDER E-MAILS



Many times the department has received requests for offenders to receive mail electronically. While giving offender’s access to computers is considered a safety and security risk, there is a

way for you to e-mail offenders located at Alcoa Correctional Center in Jefferson City, Eastern Reception Diagnostic and Correctional Center in Bonne Terre, and Women’s Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center in Vandalia through a pilot project sponsored by the department’s Offender Finance Office.

Offender family members and friends may access the email website at [www.JPay.com](http://www.JPay.com) and set up an account. If it is verified that the offender is able to receive emailed messages, you can type the letter

for distribution to the offender, via the institution’s mailroom. Each letter costs 50 cents for mailing, which is not much more than the cost of a postage stamp and trip to the post office, and the letter arrives within 24 hours! Correspondence sent via email is subject to the same content guidelines as are letters sent via the postal service. Each day, the incoming emails are printed out, scanned for content, and then forwarded to the offender. In January, approximately 1,000 e-mails were distributed to offenders using this option.

The Department of Corrections will continue to pilot this project to determine it’s dependability, value and service. It is hoped that with continued success, e-mails may eventually be sent directly to an offender’s account, and accessed by the offender via a kiosk located inside the facility. We’ll be sure and keep you posted on this initiative. •

## VISITING TIP

When visiting with children, consider their age and their ability to sit quietly for a lengthy period of time. Visiting beyond an hour or two may add stress to your visit and others in the room if the child becomes restless or tired. It is also important to remember that the temperatures are changing frequently and that means that visiting room temperatures also fluctuate. Be sure to dress appropriately in anticipation of those changes. •

## TREATMENT PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Frequently there are questions and misunderstandings that arise regarding how and when offenders, who are scheduled for participation in a substance abuse treatment program, are actually sent to those programs. Many individuals often become frustrated when the earliest projected start date comes and goes, and the offender still has not been transferred to the program.

Bed space in some of these programs is very limited, and therefore offenders may have to wait for available space in the program before a transfer can occur. Some offenders' entry may be delayed due to deterrence time, minimum mandatory prison time, etc. This means that the offender is ineligible to enter the program until after a specific date that has been established by the parole board. Once this date has passed, the offender falls under the general guidelines for program entry in which offenders with the earliest release dates are usually assigned to the program first to ensure release at the earliest opportunity.

Regardless, to avoid the frustration that occurs

when a minimum transfer date comes and goes, the department is no longer providing information regarding anticipated bed dates for an individual. Instead, staff will

only provide information about what release dates are being transferred. As example, staff may advise that offenders with a projected release date of June, 2011, are being transferred to a specific program at this time. Therefore, if an offender has a presumptive release of July, 2011, it can be generally assumed transfer to the treatment program may occur in about a month or two if the offender does not have deterrence time or minimum mandatory prison time that must be completed.

In all, we ask that everyone remain patient as program transfers occur. Be assured we do our best to get them in the program and out as quickly as possible. Thanks for your understanding. •



## ILLICIT ACTIVITIES



We all know that individuals who are involved in illicit or illegal activities make it harder for all of us, and such activities can place all of us at risk. Because prison is often a place where these types of activities occur, the department has set up a way for you and the offenders to report such activities. If you are aware of inappropriate or illegal activities occurring, you may call the Crime Tips Hotline at (573) 526-7000. If an offender wishes to report such activities, they may do so by calling \*9555 from any inmate phone within the prison. Be sure and leave as much information as possible to include dates, names and times. Remember, keeping illegal activities out of the prisons keeps everyone safer! •

## FAMILY & CHILDREN COPING STRATEGIES

The incarceration of a spouse, parent, child or loved one may cause significant changes within your family. When the offender is incarcerated they are not the only ones affected; their families are too. For many, this is just another stress to an already overburdened family unit. The following are a few coping strategies developed by family members who have experienced the separation and loss caused by incarceration. We hope you find it helpful. For a complete list of strategies, go to [www.doc.mo.gov](http://www.doc.mo.gov) and visit For Family and Friends publication.

- Stay positive, not only for yourself, but for all those who depend upon you.
- Communicate! Remain a close family unit, even if a member is not physically present. Develop ways to keep the offender involved in your life. Their advice and support may give you the strength you need to deal with any situation faced.
- Find a balance in your care giving and family responsibilities. Do not focus all of your energy on the incarcerated family member. They will have to make sacrifices too.
- Follow through on your personal goals. Even

though it is hard to do, your life and the lives of your children have to go on. Use this time to do things you may not have had a chance to do in the past such as go back to school, take up a hobby, etc.

- Find close friends or other family members that you can turn to for support and understanding. Choose people you can talk to in safety. If necessary, seek the guidance of your pastor, family physician, support group or a counselor.
- Every institution is different, so it is important that you make yourself familiar with the rules before you visit. •